

ANGLER GUIDE

FISHING PROSPECTS FOR STREAMS IN THE NORTH RIVER WATERSHED

Although several stream reaches in the watershed have been degraded by localized channelization, gravel mining, and siltation, many areas of high quality fish habitat remain. Streams in the uppermost portion of the basin are relatively small, but fishable pools are scattered between shallow riffles and sand bars. Public access is limited to county and state road bridge crossings. In these isolated pools, anglers can expect to catch carp, medium-sized channel catfish, sunfish, and small black bass.

The best fishing opportunities in the watershed occur in the lower 30 miles of North River, downstream from Callahan Mound Access, and in the South Fork North River downstream from Elmslie Conservation Area. These streams are floatable during good water levels, but there is a more frequent need to drag watercraft over riffles and debris than in the popular Ozark float streams. The need to drag over shallow areas will become less frequent downstream of state highway 168. Other public access along most of this reach is limited to bridge crossings. Anglers using a variety of methods and focusing their efforts on good pools and woody habitats can expect to encounter quality-size flathead catfish, channel catfish, freshwater drum, carp smallmouth bass, and an occasional walleye.

The lowermost reach of North River offers excellent fishing opportunities as fish of several species move between the North and Mississippi rivers. This reach of North River is accessible by boat from the Fabius Chute Access, located just a short distance from the mouth of the river. This area is well known by locals for good spring crappie fishing and excellent catfishing (including large flathead catfish) throughout much of the spring and summer months. Anglers can also catch good numbers of white bass, freshwater drum, carp, and occasional largemouth bass and walleye.